Abstract

‘The Urban Revolution’ by V. Gordon Childe (Town Planning Review, 1950) is one of the most heavily cited papers ever published by an archaeologist. The intellectual context and influence of Childe’s paper are examined here. Childe was the first to synthesise archaeological data with respect to the concept of urbanism, and the first to recognise the radical social transformation that came with the earliest cities and states. This paper traces the influence of his ideas and shows their relevance to studies of ancient urbanism today. Although Childe’s treatment of urban planning was brief, his ideas presaged current research into ancient urban planning. The paper ends with a call for renewed interaction between scholars of ancient and modern urbanism.

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